

small-business entrepreneurs in America, and we need to get rid of it. And we need to get rid of it right now.

One thing I know, and you know, that a small business is built on values. And good, strong values are what distinguish all four of the finalists who are here today. Cindy McEntee^{*} is an active member of her community, a selfless volunteer, a devoted employer. I was struck about the story about one—a longtime employee had to be airlifted for emergency hospital care in the middle of the night, one of her fellow employees. She woke up the next morning to drive 120 miles, from Newport to Portland, Oregon, to make sure that that person was getting the care she needed. That's the sign of a good boss. That's the sign of a good small-business owner. I bet morale is high in her company.

Thornton Stanley is a deacon in his church, a good dad, a loyal alumnus of Alabama A&M, a fine family man. He built his business on quality, on what he calls "playing it straight." It's a pretty good motto.

Frank Sarris shows what drive and determination and frugality can build. He's a dreamer who worked hard to achieve his dream.

Brindley Pieters is a man who took risk, never lost hope.

All four of these fine Americans represent the best of small businesses. I can't wait to find out who won. [*Laughter*] I want to thank you for what you all do for America. I want to thank you for being good employers. I want to thank you for expanding the job base. I also want to thank you for being good stewards in your community. You recognize what I know, that our communities are only as strong as the willingness of people to put time and effort and love into our neighborhoods. Small-business people do that every day.

Thank you all for coming to the White House, and God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:37 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to John D. Whitmore, Jr., Acting Administrator, Small Business Administration; Cindy M. McEntee, owner and president, Mo's Enterprises, Inc., Newport, OR; Brindley B. Pieters,

president, Brindley Pieters & Associates, Inc., Altamonte Springs, FL; Frank Sarris, president, Sarris Candies, Inc., Canonsburg, PA; and Thornton Stanley, president, Stanley Construction Co., Inc., Huntsville, AL.

Statement on Domestic Preparedness Against Weapons of Mass Destruction

May 8, 2001

Protecting America's homeland and citizens from the threat of weapons of mass destruction is one of our Nation's important national security challenges. Today, more nations possess chemical, biological, or nuclear weapons than ever before. Still others seek to join them. Most troubling of all, the list of these countries includes some of the world's least responsible states—states for whom terror and blackmail are a way of life. Some non-state terrorist groups have also demonstrated an interest in acquiring weapons of mass destruction.

Against this backdrop, it is clear that the threat of chemical, biological, or nuclear weapons being used against the United States—while not immediate—is very real. That is why our Nation actively seeks to deny chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons to those seeking to acquire them. That is why, together with our allies, we seek to deter anyone who would contemplate their use. And that is also why we must ensure that our Nation is prepared to defend against the harm they can inflict.

Should our efforts to reduce the threat to our country from weapons of mass destruction be less than fully successful, prudence dictates that the United States be fully prepared to deal effectively with the consequences of such a weapon being used here on our soil.

Today, numerous Federal departments and agencies have programs to deal with the consequences of a potential use of a chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear weapon in the United States. Many of these Federal programs offer training, planning, and assistance to State and local governments. But to maximize their effectiveness, these efforts need to be seamlessly integrated, harmonious, and comprehensive.

^{*} White House correction.

Therefore, I have asked Vice President Cheney to oversee the development of a coordinated national effort so that we may do the very best possible job of protecting our people from catastrophic harm. I have also asked Joe Allbaugh, the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, to create an Office of National Preparedness. This Office will be responsible for implementing the results of those parts of the national effort overseen by Vice President Cheney that deal with consequence management. Specifically, it will coordinate all Federal programs dealing with weapons of mass destruction consequence management within the Departments of Defense, Health and Human Services, Justice, and Energy, the Environmental Protection Agency, and other Federal agencies. The Office of National Preparedness will work closely with State and local governments to ensure their planning, training, and equipment needs are addressed. FEMA will also work closely with the Department of Justice, in its lead role for crisis management, to ensure that all facets of our response to the threat from weapons of mass destruction are coordinated and cohesive. I will periodically chair a meeting of the National Security Council to review these efforts.

No governmental responsibility is more fundamental than protecting the physical safety of our Nation and its citizens. In today's world, this obligation includes protection against the use of weapons of mass destruction. I look forward to working closely with Congress so that together we can meet this challenge.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Peacekeeping Operations

May 8, 2001

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I am pleased to transmit herewith the 2000 Annual Report to the Congress on Peacekeeping required by section 4 of the United Nations Participation Act (22 U.S.C. 287b).

United Nations and other peacekeeping operations conducted under the previous Administration helped us protect U.S. interests before they were directly threatened and helped ensure that other nations shared with

us the risks and costs of maintaining international stability.

I look forward to working with you to ensure that, under the right circumstances, peacekeeping remains a viable option for dealing with international conflicts.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; John W. Warner, chairman, Senate Committee on Armed Services; Ted Stevens, chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriations; Henry J. Hyde, chairman, House Committee on International Relations; Bob Stump, chairman, House Committee on Armed Services; and C.W. Bill Young, chairman, House Committee on Appropriations.

Remarks at the Electronic Industries Alliance Dinner

May 8, 2001

Thank you all. Thank you very much. Dave, thank you very much. I thought for a minute he was going to bring up the O-U-Texas score, but—[laughter]—he's a diplomat at heart. I appreciate your leadership, and I appreciate your friendship, and I want to thank you for inviting me here to the Electronic Industry Alliance dinner.

I want to thank the chairman, Cliff Smith, for his hospitality as well. I see the Ambassador from our great friend, the nation of Israel, here. Ambassador Ivry, good to see you, sir. Thank you very much for being here. I wasn't exactly sure why you were going to be here until I realized that this banquet is going to honor Felix Zandman for his contribution. Mr. Zandman, congratulations, sir.

It must be a pretty big deal to get the Ambassador to come to a black tie dinner like this. I know Members of the Congress are here: Congressmen Barr, Hutchinson, Issa; Sheila Jackson Lee from my old hometown of Houston, Texas; and Congressman Nick Smith. It's good to see the Members of Congress who are here, as well.

I'm honored to speak here, and I want to thank you for giving me a chance. First, it gives me a chance to tell you that Laura and I are doing great. I love my job. It's hard